Tubewells out of State Plan and 448 additional Tubewells to be installed out of assistance under Calamity Relief Fund.

Bio-Mass and Gobar Gas Plants

4842. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Bio-Mass and Gobar Gas Plants are powerful instruments towards Rural Development Programme;

(b) if so, what steps are being taken by Government in this direction; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Considering the utility of biomass resources and biogas plants for rural development, the Government have launched two national level programmes namely, (i) National Biomass Gasifier Programme and (ii) National Project for Biogas Development in the country.

(c) Does not arise.

Population living below poverty line

4843. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the latest report on Rural Development, the percentage of population living below the poverty line was 37.27 per cent in 1993-94;

(b) whether out of the 32 States mentioned, in 12 States' percentage of poverty is about 45 per cent; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have been taken to reduce the all India poverty percentage, especially in the 12 States referred to above?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA): (a) to (c) As per the Planning Commission's estimate, the percentage of rural population living below poverty line was 37.27 in 1993- 94. According to this estimate, in 10 States and one Union Territory (UT), about 45% of the rural population were living below the poverty line. The Ministery of Rural Development has been implementing a number of programmes aimed at